



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

June 8, 2005

News Release

SMUGGLERS INDICTED ON 64 ALIEN SMUGGLING COUNTS

KEY WEST—Marcos Daniel Jiménez, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Florida; Jesus Torres, Special Agent in Charge, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) ; and Rear Admiral D. Brian Peterman, Commander - 7th Coast Guard District, United States Coast Guard, announced today an Indictment returned in Key West, Florida, charging defendants, Elio Diaz-Hernandez and Edel Dominguez-Carvajal, with one- count of conspiracy to smuggle illegal aliens into the United States for profit, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371; 31 substantive counts of alien smuggling for profit, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(ii); and 31 substantive counts of bringing aliens to an undesignated port of entry, in violation of Title 8, United States Code, Section 1324(a)(2)(B)(iii).

If convicted on the alien smuggling conspiracy count, the defendants face a maximum statutory term of five-years in prison. If convicted on the substantive alien smuggling counts, the defendants face a maximum statutory term of 15-years in prison as to each count.

On May 25, 2005, law enforcement personnel from a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) aircraft and a United States Coast Guard aircraft observed Elio Diaz-Hernandez and Edel Dominguez-Carvajal operating the Florida registered vessel approximately ten nautical miles southwest of the Marquesas Keys, with approximately 31 subjects on board the vessel. Law enforcement personnel then observed Elio Diaz-Hernandez ground the vessel on shore in the Marquesas Keys. Edel Dominguez-Carvajal and the 31 Cuban nationals jumped off the boat and fled on foot. Subsequently, United States Coast Guard personnel from Key West, Florida arrived at the Marquesas Keys and located Elio Diaz-Hernandez, Edel Dominguez-Carvajal, and 31 Cuban nationals.

The vessel and all of the subjects were transported to Key West, Florida and turned over to ICE agents who determined that the 31 Cuban nationals entered the United States without prior authorization.

Mr. Jiménez commended the investigative efforts of ICE, CBP and the United States Coast Guard. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Dana Washington.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.